

Education in the Current Social, Economic and Security Environment

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ABSTRACT: This research starts from the analysis and interdependence of the social, economic and military dimensions of security and the importance of maintaining balance in a state, relative to the need to preserve its sovereignty. We consider that the threats to society, viewed through the prism of the mentioned security dimensions, must be carefully managed in this context characterized by new crises - extensive and unforeseen - in order not to create a serious state imbalance. The adaptation of education to changes in society and technology must be considered in the development of policies and, above all, in their implementation.

KEYWORDS: education, social context, cognitive development, modern skills, asymmetry threats

Our rapidly changing world faces constant major challenges – from technological disruption to climate change, conflict, forced movement of people, intolerance and hatred – transformations that further increase inequality and exert major and well-defined impacts for decades to come. The COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed and deepened these inequalities as well as the fragility of our societies. It is imperative that all of us, those who make up the education of our nation, take a stand and have stronger, transformative, creative and modern thinking that provides the educational tools to determine the necessary changes in the growth of economies, in

respect of human rights and human dignity, in eradicating poverty and achieving sustainability and resilience.

It should be noted that the importance of education in the social context intervenes only if it allows us, individuals, to contribute to the understanding, interpretation, preservation, consolidation, promotion and dissemination of national and regional, international and historical cultures, in a context of pluralism and cultural diversity. That it will only be found in a hierarchy when it helps to protect and strengthen society's values, ensuring that young people learn the values on which democratic society rests. Education fulfills society's functions, including individual development, socialization, social integration, social placement, and social and cultural innovation.

Introduction

Based on the theory that if the state loses its sovereignty, it will no longer survive as a state (Chifu, Nantoi and Sushko 2008, 168), threats to societal security must be viewed with utmost care because they affect the state as a whole and not just a specific component of it. In a globalized world, it is difficult to imagine what would be all the threats to societal security that could appear, analyzing through the prism of its basic elements, namely cohesion and integration within a collectivity, whose members are bound by traditions, common values and goals, with the aim of preserving identity.

In the specialized literature, several examples of threats to societal security are identified (Chifu, Nantoi and Sushko 2008, 168), among which: cultural cleansing that manifests itself through the systemic approach towards the destruction or limitation of institutions and/or cultural symbols important for group identity; ethnic cleansing embodied in the deliberate, voluntary harassment, violence, murder, and/or deportation of members of one society by another society. The characteristic element of threats to societal security is that they are, as a rule, initiated by a small, minority group that has the perception that it is not treated equally with the rest of the community, but they produce a direct impact on the community as a whole.

From the perspective of threats to identity, the studies in the field (Chifu, Nantoi and Sushko 2008, 170) list elements related to minority rights, extremism/nationalism, religious identity, cultural identity, the historical foundation or the language of certain groups of individuals, and

from the perspective of threats to cohesion, changes in demographic models, separatism, regionalization, anarchy, poverty - economic status, migration, family and family models are mentioned, the specialized literature specifying that to be considered genuine threats to societal security, they must bring affecting the existence and/or way of life of individuals within society.

We appreciate that in order to try to reduce threats of this type to security, it is necessary to adopt a package of measures with a horizontal dimension, respectively with the involvement of all the internal authorities of the states for the application of existing laws and the improvement of the legislative framework, but also for the management borders through judicial collaboration between political, economic, financial bodies and non-governmental entities, completed with a vertical dimension, in which case European, regional and international cooperation is essential, with the elaboration of policies, agreements and unitary initiatives, common at the level of the European Union and the member states.

1. Education in the face of new development challenges

With the birth of this new century, the demand for education is unprecedented and this is due, from one perspective, to the rapid technological development accompanied by an equally accelerated transformation of it, and to a greater awareness of the fundamental importance that education has for economic and socio-cultural development.

The hypothesis from which we start in this research, based on the method of systematic evaluation of studies carried out in the current technological development alert on society and the economy, resides in the impact of new technologies on education. Thus, the question is, how big is the impact of the Internet and advanced technologies - device-to-device communication using 5G, artificial intelligence, etc. - on education? Smart cities are being designed around us, a space called Meta World that aims for “a large digital economy” and that will open right inside the virtual universe and other developments that require adapting education to what the context of the future means.

Nobel Prize-winning economists have considered the education-as-investment argument. Schultz (1963, 65), argued that investment in

education explains growth, and Gary Becker offered the human capital theory. In short, human capital theory holds that investment in education has a return in terms of higher wages. Moreover, the theory and empirical estimates are supported by current science.

Neurogenesis also tells us that learning can continue into old age. The relative costs and benefits of investing in older people are different. Investments in more capable workers at any age generate higher returns than investments in less capable workers, and capability is built at young ages. According to the “education pays” theory, it is generally believed that an additional year of schooling will increase earnings by 10 percent per year. This is usually larger than any other investment a person can make.

According to the World Bank website, the skills required by the labor market are changing. One of the reasons for the changing profitability model is the race between technology and education as labor markets adapt to automation. In this new world, the ability of workers to compete is hampered by the poor performance of education systems in most developing countries. Technological change and global competition require the mastery of skills and the acquisition of new skills for many people.

To promote success in today’s labor market, we need to invest early in relevant skills adapted to the demands of the labor market. Above all, educational entities need to invest smartly, with a focus on autonomy, accountability and assessment, but also pay attention to teachers, their development and ongoing culture.

When we talk about education, we immediately think of its purpose, because today’s students will be tomorrow’s employees. Since education is hundreds of years old, and technology is changing at breakneck speed, we reckon the former will be in for a shock. Just as digital technology has disrupted and improved most major segments of the world economy, education and training will similarly undergo a technological revolution.

It is now proving that the struggle for human resources is more important than that for natural resources as educated and skilled labor is highly sought after in the contemporary world, becoming a huge global business. Today, the combined education and training industries account for more than \$4 trillion in spending globally, which is huge growth. In Romania, unfortunately, this phenomenon is still not found.

Lifelong learning illustrates an ongoing process of flexible learning opportunities in which learning is complemented by skills acquired in formal institutions. At the level of the European Union, it is desired to increase the role of continuous education, this concept being more and more desired. It is necessary for people to understand that they must permanently complete their knowledge and skills as an individual, citizen and employee, which is essential to support competitiveness in a global economy based on knowledge and technology and to participate in a democratic society.

Since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution (beginning in the late 18th century in England), the private sector has gradually taken over much of the responsibility for lifelong education (one example being the Waldorf education system developed by the German philosopher Rudolf Steiner, currently spread globally). In the same trend, the efforts are integrated so that education is still oriented toward the future in an economy marked by Revolution 4.0, the latest industrial revolution.

Studies show that today's young people, as digital natives (term introduced in 2001 by education writer Marc Prensky in the article "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants"), are born surrounded by digital technology (notebooks, computers, Internet, mobile phones). They can have and develop skills that can rival those of a teacher and cause the classic change of hierarchy in a classroom. In this context, the teacher is no longer the one who completely coordinates the spectrum of knowledge, he is no longer a cognitive instance, but it is good for him to remain the person in the classroom who facilitates learning. This can be achieved by identifying and exploiting opportunities for learning and dialogue between the student, the spectrum of disciplines and pedagogical aspects. This dynamic represents the future social space of the teacher's work.

Also, a particularly valuable study carried out by the consulting company Deloitte, in association with the Global Business Coalition for Education (Preparing tomorrow's workforce for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, a joint report from Deloitte and the Global Business Coalition for Education, 2018), shows to what extent the future is fluid and has a high degree of uncertainty, for a significant share of young people, internationally. The study shows that by the end of 2030, more than half of young people worldwide, currently aged 15-29 (around 1.8 billion), will not have the skills

or qualifications needed to get a job of work because the next industrial revolution would radically change human work activities and job categories of the future. Industry 4.0 seems to be a great challenge for Romanian public education, forcing it to open its programs to contemporary realities. The authors of the mentioned study record that Industry 4.0 will resort to educational factors and training centers that can keep up with the need for continuous professional training. Therefore, the prestigious universities in Romania, the strong university centers, must reform themselves and be fully aware of transformations and adaptations of the contents and forms of the specializations they offer, which tend towards permanent training programs, carried out in partnership with the entrepreneurial environment - the main beneficiaries.

Education has essential cultural implications, being the best way to pass on values and traditions to the next generation. It also has the role of social education, offering each individual the opportunity to educate himself, to accumulate knowledge, to develop in general, in order to become an informed and active citizen who contributes to the development of the society of which he is a part. We believe that the most important role that education has is that of personal development. It is necessary for all members of a society to have the opportunity to develop according to their own capacities, to ensure their independence and prosperity as well as that of their families. Continuous development through lifelong learning is essential for today's society.

There are currently efforts by the Romanian intellectual elite to raise the level of education in Romania. An analysis carried out by the Romanian Academy (2015) called "Romania's development strategy in the next 20 years," tried to outline a long-term national strategy, until 2035, through which an emotional refounding of the human resource was attempted, in order to restore optimism and confidence in the educational system, the only system through which Romanian society could perform economically and socially. However, the studies of the highest academic forum in Romania were not found within the programs developed by the institutions responsible for the organization of Romanian education. Instead, a series of projects financed by European funds were developed, addressed both to teaching staff and pupils and students.

Digital technology has become mandatory in the 21st century to be socially, economically and culturally integrated. The European Union finances the development of education through information and communication technology (ICT), in order to equip schools with the necessary equipment. Thus, information and communication technology has generated both a significant increase in the preparation, planning and delivery of lessons, as well as an increase in the use of these technologies in the learning process itself. The teachers themselves must have expertise in the methodology of computer use. Regardless of their specialty and position, teachers must be convinced that this tool will transform teaching methodologies even more than the advent of the printing press in the 15th century. The computer has, as a unique characteristic, interactivity, a quality that other teaching aids do not have. Also, any kind of process can be modeled with it.

As a result of the socio-economic changes generated by artificial intelligence, the E.U. supports partnerships between the business environment and the educational system and the establishment of training programs, through the programs of the next multiannual financial framework (2021-2027). However, studies by organizations such as the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), carried out in 2012 on 15-year-old students, show that, in countries where a lot has been invested in education through digital technology, it is not seen a noticeable improvement in results. The study shows that 96% of the students surveyed have a computer at home, but that 72% of the students use a computer at school (OECD 2012).

The conclusion is that students who use the computer moderately at school converge towards better results than those who use the computer sporadically, and students who use the computer very often in the school environment have much poorer results than those who use the computer less often or moderately (taking into account social and demographic aspects).

In countries where the Internet is used intensively in schools, no improvement in school performance among students has been found. Moreover, three of the countries with the highest rates of internet use in schools are experiencing a significant decline in reading performance (Australia, New Zealand and Sweden), and three other countries are experiencing stagnation, Spain, Norway and Denmark (OECD 2012, 35). Countries such as South Korea, Shanghai, China and Singapore, ranked

first in terms of tested performance, are those that make little or moderate use of the technology.

In conclusion, the use of virtual (electronic) education should take into account the following arguments: geographical area, number of students, access to study material, and study speed. It is also important to consider the culture and technical training of the school before bringing in robot teaching assistants.

The software provided with artificial intelligence is still in the implementation phase and we think it will take some time before it could replace the professor in the classroom. Also, the total replacement of teachers with virtual software is recommended only in primary education and only in places where schools do not exist, are not effective, teachers do not exist or are not effective. In the absence of these arguments, there is no need for an alternative education system. However, we can say that “a teacher replaced by a machine probably needs to be replaced” (Sir Arthur C. Clacke).

According to The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD - an international organization that works to build better policies for better lives), the specific assessment of Romania within the PISA 2021 (Programme for International Student Assessment) will include, in addition to the data on the development of students' skills in the fields of reading, mathematics and science, for the first time, an innovative field of testing: creative thinking. Thus, the aim is to identify the factors that support the development of creativity and the role of different school activities in this regard. A series of studies presented at the World Economic Forum in Davos regarding the impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution showed the skills of the future employee.

Thus, according to the Future of Jobs Report (World Economic Forum 2020a), the list of skills of the future employee will include: the ability to solve complex problems; critical thinking; creative skills; people management; teamwork skills; emotional intelligence; analytical and decision-making skills; service orientation; of negotiation as well as flexibility in thinking. Thus, the analysis of the skills required for the workforce of the future reveals that the development of social and emotional skills becomes an important objective, these being common requirements of all education systems around the world.

Until now, the Romanian school has not succeeded in developing the personality of children or adults, nor has it set itself this goal. Romanian educational institutions are focused especially on the preparation of standardized activities, not on the development of certain types of intelligence, on autonomy and complex thinking. Thus, during the various national and international comparative assessments, PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study), *has monitored trends in reading achievement at the fourth grade since 2001. PIRLS is administered every five years, making 2021 the fifth assessment of PIRLS (TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center 2022)*, PISA, TIMSS (*Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study; since 1995, TIMSS has monitored trends in mathematics and science achievement every four years, at the fourth and eighth grades. TIMSS 2019 was the seventh such assessment, providing 24 years of trends. TIMSS 2019 began the transition to eAssessment, where countries could administer TIMSS 2019 in electronic or paper format, (TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center 2022)*) of the last decade, it was repeatedly found that the majority of students in Romania have unsatisfactory literacy skills - they do not understand written requirements in the absence of teacher support, they read texts informative without understanding the ideational content of these texts, they don't answer comprehension questions correctly, they don't have the skill to work with texts of different types to extract information, data, etc.

These programs enable evidence-based decision-making to improve literacy and mathematics education and enable the use of results to: monitor system-level trends in a global context; monitor the impact of new educational policies; identify weaknesses and stimulate curriculum reform accordingly; improve teaching and learning through research and conducting related studies, such as equity monitoring or student assessment in supplementary classes. From the point of view of thinking, multiple perspectives on a problem can generate speed and effectiveness in work and can increase efficiency in preventing psychological aggressions of a personal and organizational nature.

Thus, one of the modern methods we propose is the development of lateral thinking. Although the concept was developed in 1967 by Edward de Bono (considered the world authority in creativity and creative thinking, also called "the father of thinking about thinking"), in Romania, it still has a

novelty character. It is almost non-existent in the public education system, although courses in lateral thinking are taught in thousands of schools around the world and are part of the compulsory curriculum in many of them.

What is unique about lateral thinking is its applicability to an unusually wide area, so it can be applied to a number of military specialties within career or specialization courses.

Lateral thinking describes a systematic innovative thinking process that goes beyond the limiting patterns of logical thinking. It emphasizes creativity and significantly increases the ability to develop new ideas and identify new solutions. It does not replace logical (vertical) thinking, but complements it. It is used on a large scale in companies such as 3M, IBM, McDonald's, Procter & Gamble, Bosch. Lateral thinking can be an indispensable attribute for specialists working in the fields of security or intelligence. It can also be successfully used in risk analyzes of an objective by identifying opportunities within a SWOT analysis. The development of critical thinking, also among the population of Romania, is a way to counteract the actions of social manipulation with high chances, by introducing this type of thinking in education at all levels. And in this sense, Romania has important steps to take. Traditionally in Romanian society (of the paternalistic type), is currently used types of non-critical thinking, as well as desiderative thinking (with psychological functions, but without cognitive functions), also known as "ishfull thinking", or inauthentic manipulative-speculative thinking, "the truth is in the middle" being a representative expression for Romanian society.

The reason for the development of critical thinking was the dissatisfaction and restraint, related to what human reason actually is, more precisely, the classical studies dedicated to reason, carried out mainly by logicians, were relevant especially for mathematical reasoning or for philosophical speculation, but irrelevant for the way simple people and even specialists reason in life and in their daily concerns. Although critical thinking involves logic, it is more comprehensive than it, as it involves not only logic, but also the truth or falsity of statements, the evaluation of arguments and evidence, the use of analysis and investigation, the application of several skills that help us decide what is worth we believe or do. Critical thinking does not block your creativity, on the contrary, it enhances it, and ensures your freedom to act prudently and rationally.

In terms of increasing the population's resilience to the effects of an information war, a situation in which actions are carried out through current mass media channels and implicitly specialized social media platforms, an area where uncritical thinking predominates, the population is exposed and the consequence is that they can manipulate the opinions of a social group in the desired direction to generate confusion, frustrations, bewilderment, insecurity, impulsive behavior or even violence, specific manifestations of a new typology of war.

We therefore need the introduction of critical thinking classes in schools, but also the promotion of courses and trainings for adults, adapted to their socio-professional requirements, within continuing education programs. Currently, critical thinking courses are found mostly at the university and postgraduate level, in very few faculties with a humanistic profile and belong to an Anglo-Saxon pedagogical model. We appreciate that the development of resilience within society, against psychological aggression can be built through the use of modern techniques such as Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP), Coaching, Leadership, Communication Development Techniques. All this will ultimately contribute to social and individual development accompanied, of course, by efficiency at work.

2. The influence of technological development on security

Currently, the threats of destabilizing the world market through crisis phenomena complicated by the characteristics of globalization are increasing and an effective security system is the cornerstone of the successful development of any economy and, of course, any society. Strong increases in exchange rates of the financial sector, as well as the instability of the raw materials market, the emergence of new types of fraud in the banking sector, all these challenges require the development of new parameters for the security and economic development of the country. In addition, the new coronavirus pandemic has greatly influenced the socio-economic environment.

It is well known that the economy can be considered a key indicator for ensuring the security of the state, and in this sense, we can say that it is currently given priority in the strengthening of defense capabilities. The relationships

between the components of general security (political, economic, military, social, environmental) definitely need research and current, modern and real studies and in order for these things to be achievable, it is necessary that education from a security point of view be suitable for economic, social, technological development as well as military capabilities.

In this sense, the educational plans and the methods of their implementation to which the obtained results are added, represent determining factors of security, whether it is national, regional or international. If the education system has an appropriate political mandate, if it has the internal resources and support to reform education, then the relevant priorities of the mandate will be identified accordingly.

Quality education lays the most solid foundations for individual (micro-level) and national (macro-level) economic security, making it an indisputable condition for a stable and sustainable political, economic and social environment. And the studies related to the current economic development determine figures that not only influence education but even require a radical change in the current methods and techniques so that the learning results - the skills created - are for a large majority of graduates sufficient to be present on the labor market.

Thus, according to the Future of Jobs Report of the World Economic Forum (2020b) by 2025, a percentage of 50% of all employees will need reskilling, as the adoption of new technologies will increase and this requires a major investment in human capital to meet the challenges development. "Critical thinking and problem-solving are at the top of the list of skills that employers believe will grow in prominence over the next five years" (World Economic Forum 2020a). Since 2020, the demand for self-management skills such as active learning, resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility has emerged among employers' requirements.

The third edition of the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report, which maps the jobs and skills of the future, tracking the pace of change and the direction of movement, estimates that around 1.1 billion jobs are likely to be radically transformed by technology in a decade. What are the challenges that education must respond to? We believe that in addition to technological changes, the COVID-19 pandemic and the ecological transition are crises of a social nature that pose great risks to people's livelihoods. The Future of

Jobs 2020 report “indicates that by 2025, time spent on current tasks at work by humans and machines will be equal. Therefore, investment in human capital is urgently needed to create a fairer world, ensuring that people are given the chance to fulfill their potential and thrive” (World Economic Forum 2020a). Leading global companies and international civil society and academic organizations are currently working to promote new approaches to competitiveness, to build a new pro-worker and pro-business jobs agenda, and to integrate equality and inclusion in the new economy.

Leading global companies and international civil society and academic organizations are currently working to promote new approaches to competitiveness, to build a new pro-worker and pro-business jobs agenda, and to integrate equality and inclusion in the new economy.

The beginning of the century has already subjected humanity to two great tests with a global character, the economic crisis (2008) and the medical crisis (SARS-Cov2), both characterized by massive influences in society. If we start from the idea that two such crises have already taken place in two decades (with a global character and massive social impact), it follows that society is faced with new threats, to which it must respond promptly and creatively.

The dynamics of the security environment, the development of cutting-edge and information technologies, the diversification of political, economic, cultural and military interests of state and non-state actors, have determined the increase in the complexity of real or potential threats and disruptions, which generate changes at the geopolitical level and require the redefinition and the development of new security and defense policies and strategies by international and national organizations. In this sense, we note the diversity and extent of threats and disruptions in the international security environment, which cause the emergence of military and non-military crises and conflicts in the physical, informational, cyber, psychological and media environment.

The international security environment has become a geopolitical chessboard, where disruptive and destructive factors are strongly manifested, inducing vulnerabilities and fragilities that affect the stability, cohesion and development of states at the global, regional and national levels. The way tectonic disturbances manifest does not know the limits imposed by borders, it does not differentiate between internal or external security, nor between democratic and autocratic states. In this sense, as globalization ensures progress

and improves the living conditions of citizens, it also causes disruptive and destructive vulnerabilities and fragilities in the security environment.

This approach leads us to affirm that, apart from the traditional challenges and threats with a direct impact on security and defense, such as war, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their vectors - terrorism, organized crime - humanity faces a wide range of disturbances generated by human activity and the physical factors of the environment. The category of “massive disruptive attacks” includes climate change, cyberspace, social networks, migration, pandemics, the exacerbation of extremism and fundamentalism.

Therefore, the war in the current era is based on hyper-connectivity, information being its weapon. It is closely related to Big Data whose data can be used to alter the way of thinking within societies of interest when individuals are connected online. Asymmetric warfare uses much more complex technologies than information warfare or psychological operations, because the battle is to take control of the human brain, not just an information battle.

This type of threat involves influencing human knowledge through the use of information processing capabilities in order to generate conflicts. For this purpose, large amounts of information are needed in order to identify influential individuals or to carry out influence operations. The main asymmetric threats are currently closely related to the use of social media and modern technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) or Big Data.

3. Conclusions

In conclusion, we appreciate that the most effective defense against social threats is awareness of the social implications of an action. Thus, the level must be reached so that a critical percentage of the population is aware of the vulnerabilities, risks and threats to itself and the society of which it is a part. For greater efficiency, there is a need to mediate among the population some sets of norms and values, to be generated through public policies and implemented through education and to be protected and respected. Likewise, another effective measure that the authorities can adopt is the promotion of security culture within civil society as well.

The trans and inter-disciplinary approach of the article, in which we included the economy, security and education, leads us to the conclusion that

the development of technology also affects military capabilities and their use requires that the military, in turn, have those skills and abilities that allow to do so. So they are included in the percentage promoted by the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs Report of about 50% of employees who will need reskilling as the adoption of new technologies increases.

4. Materials and methods used

The methods used in this article are diverse. The dialectical method of knowledge made it possible to identify the basic laws and categories of economic security viewed from the perspective of science, and also the socio-economic roots of threats to the economic security of the state. The dialectical method of knowledge, a philosophical concept defined as a very old form of finding the truth, allowed the identification of the basic laws and defining elements of economic security from a scientific perspective, as well as the socio-economic roots of threats to the country's security.

Specific scientific methods were also used when writing the article. The comparative method was used as a basis for the analysis of institutions, categories and concepts by comparing them with similar provisions in other states and the logical legal method was used to reveal the concept and essence of economic security, as well as its threats and principles.

Subsequently, the methods of analysis and synthesis were used to summarize the theoretical material and formulate conclusions based on them. The statistical and sociological methods allowed the analysis of the consequences of the current socio-economic situation and also allowed the estimation of some trends that we find in the chapter dedicated to the conclusions.

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